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AN INQUIRY
INTO THE
MUSICAL INSTRUCTION
OF
THE BLIND.

“The study of music affords to the blind the purest and most unmixed pleasure ; for in this pursuit are they least reminded of their infirmity. They find in it scope for the highest imagination, as well as the deepest feelings of religion ; and when a blind man becomes a musician, he is one with his whole *heart*, giving up to this study his entire energies and thoughts.”—“*The Blind, their Works and Ways.*”—*Edinburgh Review*, January, 1854.

AN INQUIRY
—
INTO THE
MUSICAL INSTRUCTION
OF
THE BLIND,

IN FRANCE, SPAIN, AND AMERICA,

IN A LETTER TO
SAMUEL HENRY STERRY, Esq. (CHAIRMAN),
AND THE OTHER MEMBERS
OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE SCHOOL FOR THE INDIGENT BLIND;

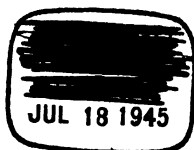
BY

EDMUND C. JOHNSON,
MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE SCHOOL FOR THE INDIGENT BLIND,
ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS;
OF THE SOCIETY FOR PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTING BOOKS FOR THE BLIND;
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF FLORENCE,
MEMBER OF THE LITERARY ASSOCIATION OF CAIRO;
AUTHOR OF
"TANGIBLE TYPOGRAPHY, OR HOW THE BLIND READ."

LONDON:
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AN ENQUIRY
INTO THE
MUSICAL INSTRUCTION
OF
THE BLIND.

MY DEAR MR. STERRY,

You did me the honor, together with the other Members of the Blind School Committee, of requesting me, as your representative, to enquire into the subject of Musical Instruction of the Blind, as developed in the various institutions of France and the Continent. As I have only just now returned from Paris and Germany, I take the earliest opportunity of throwing together my varied notes, taken during the course of my enquiry, and have the honour of presenting them for your consideration. I have received the greatest kindness and assistance, during my investigations, from M. Guadet, the Director, of the Imperial Institution for the Blind, at Paris, who kindly furnished me with his latest researches on the subject, and which I have largely and almost literally translated for your guidance; whilst I have also been enabled, by a personal visit to the Blind Schools of Spain, to ascertain the mode in which they have succeeded in that country in establishing an efficient instrumental *Band of Blind Musicians* at Barcelona.

As I was only solicited to report *on musical instruction as applied to other instruments than the organ and pianoforte*, those being so well and so thoroughly understood and taught in our own establishment, under the distinguished auspices of Mr. Turle, I shall

refrain from troubling you with the details of the remarkable proficients on those instruments to be met with in England and throughout the Continent, and shall only tell you how the Blind receive their musical instructions on other instruments.

During the summer of 1854, I visited the Blind School of Barcelona, the most complete one of its kind throughout Spain, and was very much pleased and astonished at the amount of progress hitherto made in the education of the Blind in that Institution. The School is situated in the Plaza Santa Anna, in an old convent, which has been allotted by the Government to the uses of the Corporation of Barcelona, who have established therein a very large school, divided into several sections, for the general instruction of children of young and of more advanced ages, and likewise for those afflicted with partial or total blindness. Unlike charitable schools in other countries, it is devoted exclusively to mental and musical instruction; neither food nor clothing being found; whilst, the attendance, not being compulsory, is somewhat irregular, the number of pupils depending greatly on caprice, the uncertainty of the weather, or any extraneous circumstance. The hours of attendance are nominally from nine to twelve, and from three to six, with several intermissions on fête days and holidays, which, being of frequent occurrence in so Catholic a country as Spain, make it difficult for visitors to find both masters and pupils at work.

The establishment accommodates a large number of scholars, though there are but about sixty or eighty blind pupils, who attend most irregularly. Forty-five to fifty males and twelve to fourteen females is the ordinary number that can be got together, except on particular occasions. The locale is very Spanish, being very fragrant with the fumes of garlic, and very "al fresco" as regards furniture and school accommodation. *On the boys' side* there are several small cells, once the sleeping chambers of bygone friars, but now devoted to the practising of one or other of the many musical

instruments on which the pupils are taught. There are three larger rooms for the masters, who give separate instruction to their various classes in music—that being the chief feature in the education—a greater portion of time being devoted to its acquirement than to any thing else. Indeed, as far as the males are concerned, there is little else in which they are proficient. The head master or director of the school spoke French, and therefore was enabled to carry on a conversation with me. I attended his class of instruction in the morning, and was astonished at the proficiency of his pupils. He taught them a portion of a mass, by Palestrina, and had, ere I left, almost succeeded in perfecting them in the task. This little troop consisted of *two violins, a cornet, clarionet, French horn, and two flutes*. The music was called out by the professor: those who understood notes or written music being told the notes they were to produce, others only taking up the air by ear. There is but little attempt to teach the theory of music, though in a few instances it has been done; and it is now in contemplation to effect so desirable an end more generally. The acute ear of the Spaniard and his innate love of music seem doubly developed amongst blind persons, and to become to them a source of unceasing amusement. There is a degree of cheerfulness and vivacity about the Spanish blind which surprised me; they seem less helpless than their northern brothers in affliction, whilst their gaiety of manner is no doubt dependent on the vivacity and dignity of the national character. Their deportment is very Spanish, and they possess a self-confidence and a nobleness of bearing not hitherto remarked among the inmates of similar schools in other parts of Europe. They appear to belong chiefly to the lower orders: though some are well dressed and clean, others forcibly reminded me of the acute, handsome, and sun-burnt subjects that have become immortalized by the brush of Murillo. The two under masters also gave instruction in music, and in the other branches of education; whilst a very intelligent priest attended to the moral and religious training of the little community.

The music is not only *read* to the younger pupils, but *intoned* by the masters, whilst many of them write down on paper, by means of the frame and style of Mon. Braille (the French dotted system), the notes they are to commit to memory. There is great care taken that *part music* shall form one chief subject of instruction; as the directors very wisely foresee that if the blind are taught to play out of class, they will only, in after life, become itinerant street-players, and crowd the town as beggars. There are many pupils who write fluently on the Braille system, though there seems a great objection to its free adoption, *in consequence of its arbitrary character*; and they only wait the arrival of writing machines from England, to commence work with our ordinary writing frame. No trade or other manual employment is taught amongst the males; and, indeed, it is feared that they would be little inclined to avail themselves of instruction in manual labour, if offered to them. It is, however, in contemplation to establish a more permanent school, after our English models, when it is expected that the government and municipality will not only help it with funds, but will cause the pupils to be instructed in trades. At present, the Spanish government only affords the building, the town furnishing the necessary means to carry on the school.

The most intelligent male pupil was one Casa Pugiberti, 21 years of age, and blind from birth. He had been three years under instruction,—wrote well, both prose and music,—*played on two instruments*, was very well informed, and of rather a better rank of life than his fellows. He appeared much delighted at the visit of an Englishman, and was very grateful for the interest taken in his doings. I was to return in the afternoon, when the Directors and Municipality had kindly invited me to be present at a concert which they had arranged for my convenience.

The female portion of the school was on a much smaller scale than the male. There the instruction was conducted by a mistress, whose sole duties consisted in teaching her pupils to knit, make bead work,

sewing, and netting. A peculiar manufacture of gimp was carried on by one pupil, which, I think, might be introduced into our English schools with advantage ; it seemed to be very easily and quickly performed, and to be a pleasant work. One old woman was very dexterous with her fingers, and threaded her needles with her tongue, as other blind persons frequently do. The Priest above mentioned instructed the females in mental education, which seemed to consist in the repetition of prayers and hymns, and the topography of the town. He has himself made some excellent raised maps in wood and cardboard, and has thus taught his pupils to find their way amongst the intricate and narrow streets of Barcelona. He appeared a very mild and patient Spaniard ; whose work was really more of love than profit. There seemed to be an indisposition to introduce *embossed books* ; though, after a long conversation with this priest, which was interpreted by a gentleman, a member of the municipality of Barcelona, he appeared to concur in my views of a literature for the blind, and begged me to send him some type from England, that he might print books on religious subjects in the Roman capital letter.

The great evil of the whole institution is the admission of cases not totally blind. The same objection holds good here as in England ; as the seeing lead the blind into mischief, and rather trust to what little sight is yet left to them, than to proper oral and manual instruction. Some of the cases possessed a considerable amount of sight, whilst others were completely blind ; the blind, as usual, being the more patient and persevering, and becoming the chief proficient in their art.

At three o'clock, I attended *the Instrumental Concert*, and had a grand opportunity of witnessing the proficiency of the blind in music. The Band consisted of twenty-three in number ; viz. *ten violins, two contra bassi, two clarionets, two horns, two cornets, two flutes, one trumpet, one fife, and one drum*. The selection of music consisted of lively airs and operatic morceaux, which were performed

with the regularity and precision of a well-trained orchestra. It was by far the best musical performance of the kind I had as yet heard. The performance of a boy of ten years of age, on the flute and the fife, was very surprising and perfect of its kind; whilst the violins and cornets were handled in a manner worthy of masters of the art. The band was conducted by the chief professor, who beat time on a piece of board, and occasionally walked amongst his blind pupils, giving oral instruction as he passed. I received the very greatest attention and civility from the Court of Directors, all members of the municipality of Barcelona, none of whom had ever seen a blind school out of their own country, and who were necessarily most anxious to have the opinion of any one at all connected with a foreign school.

Surely, if such things can be accomplished in Spain—a country nearly 100 years behind all other European nations in civilization—is it not a scandal to our English philanthropists that no attempts have as yet been made in the largest English School to introduce the teaching of instrumental music, other than the organ and piano-forte. I am well aware that I shall be met with the question—How do you intend that blind musicians should get their living in England? Would you educate them to become strolling fiddlers, or public-house musicians? The question is, I admit, a difficult one; but if a wholesome patronage could be given, and fair inducement offered to blind persons to unite together and *form a good band*, which could be employed by those requiring *bands of music* for fêtes or festivities, surely an honest living might be the result, and charity and amusement go hand in hand, and materially help a very deserving class of our afflicted brethren.

Orchestras of blind performers have been established in other parts of the Continent, though all of them inferior to those of Paris and Barcelona. At the Blind Asylum of Hamburgh, not only the higher branches of trade and manufacture are taught, but

particular attention is paid to the instrumental musical instruction of their pupils. In the "*Bienfaiteur*," a periodical devoted to the cause of the Blind and the Deaf and Dumb, there is a long account of a fête given at the Hamburg school, on the occasion of the commencement of the winter vacation, in which it is stated that "the pupils performed a very spirited chorus, and were examined in Bible history; after which they executed Mendelssohn's quadrille of 'La Vallée du Repos.' Two girls played a sonata of Kuhlau's, and were examined in the German language. Another sang a piece from The Messiah; and two boys played a movement by Mozart. The fête was concluded with an examination in arithmetic; the song of Mendelssohn, 'Le temple de la grotte;' the quadrille of C. M. von Weber, 'Venez dancier;' an examination in geography and geometry; and a piece by the *grand orchestre*."

Again, at *Lille*, in France, the *Orchestre* of the Blind School numbers about *eighteen performers*, all of whom are more or less proficient in musical science. The following description of a concert that was given in the establishment will show in some degree the increased desire of the French to extend the instruction in instrumental music beyond the walls of Paris, and to establish a healthy rivalry among the blind schools of their provincial towns.

"Le concert préparé et annoncé eut lieu dans la cour même de l'institution des aveugles. La plus brillante assemblée se trouvait spontanément réunie, pour jouir des contrastes piquants de cette fête d'un nouveau genre. L'élite de la société de Lille s'était donné rendez-vous, et dès cinq heures, plus de deux mille personnes encombraient tout l'intérieur de l'établissement; la séance se prolongea jusqu'au soir. C'était plaisir de voir cet orchestre d'aveugles, composé de 18 élèves exécutants, et d'entendre de début si éclatant d'harmonie et si remarquable de précision. Nous ne citons pas ici tous les endroits interrompus par les applaudissements de l'auditoire, mais nous signalerons quelques noms parmi ceux

qui ont le mieux emporté le succès. Au premier rang se place naturellement le jeune Dessailly, de Boulogne, qui s'est montré supérieurement dans trois morceaux d'orchestre, et qui vient de concourir à Paris, pour la place d'organiste au séminaire de Saint-Nicolas du Chardonneret. Le jeune Henri Decottigny a dignement fait sa partie; il est regardé comme le premier ophicleïde alto du département, et le premier trombonne a coulisse; Charles Fergon est une excellente flûte; Maurice Debrosse-Delabarge s'est montré à cet instrument un rival redoutable; le jeune Morel, bon cornet à piston, s'est surpassé ce jour-là dans l'exécution; Vast et Truffier, dans *le Réveil du Lion*, ont obtenu d'unanimes bravos; nous ajouterons que les fantaisies de piano et de flûte, ont également surpris les amateurs par leur imprévu et leur aplomb, et que le résultat de la quête a dépassé la somme de deux mille francs."

At Dresden and Berlin, bands of blind instrumental performers have been established, and great success has been attained in the concerts given at the blind schools of those towns.

In *L'Institut des Jeunes Aveugles at Paris*, there are three professors, together with four assistants, charged with the duty of instructing a band of about thirty-four performers. These professors combine a knowledge of many different instruments, each one taking a class for instruction in the following manner:—The first and second violin, violoncello, and double bass, are taught by the chief professor; a second takes the class of flute, hautboy, clarinet, and serpent; and a third, the horn, cornet, drum, and cymbals. These professors are all blind men, and have been reared in the institution: the chief being likewise leader and director of the band, and selector of the music. The mode of instruction is partly auricular and partly by embossed notation (according to the system of Braille), which is carried on in the following manner:—A piece of music being chosen, it is at once divided into *parts* or scores for each instrument. The particular parts are then rehearsed *singly*, the pro-

fessor reading aloud the *notes*, the pupil repeating and at the same time *writing them* by means of his own embossing frame. This done, *the piece is committed to memory*, the pupil being taught, note by note, in the same manner as the younger pupils are instructed to play upon the organ and piano in our English Blind schools. Musical notation, therefore, is only considered useful as a means of fixing the meaning and measure of the notes upon the memory, as it is obviously impossible that raised or embossed music can be of any avail during the performance of a piece—the eyes of the blind (their fingers) being required to manipulate during their performance on any instrument.

Thus the mode of instructing *a Band* is in every way the same as that of giving lessons in a single instrument, only the number of instructors must be greater, and the practice in concert more necessary. The same rules that apply to the instruction of our choir, hold good in the united performances of a band of blind musicians.

The *Band* of the Paris Blind School consists of *thirty-six performers* :

4 first violins,	2 flutes,	1 cornet-à-piston,
4 second ditto,	1 octave flute,	2 bassoons,
4 alto,	1 hautboy,	2 drums,
5 violoncellos,	2 clarionets,	1 triangle,
2 contra bassi,	4 horns,	1 large drum ;

and the pieces which they perform are mostly selections from celebrated composers : Beethoven's Symphonies, Mendelssohn's finest works, Mozart's and Handel's Masses and Studies, and the higher works of Auber, Adolph Adam, and Mayerbeer. They were practising, at the time of my visit, the overture to *L'Etoile du Nord*, one of the last novelties of the season.

The expense of the musical instruction thus carried on is about £150 a year, including an outlay for instruments (their primary cost being only 2000 francs, or £80), together with the salary of the

professors, and their clothing. The time necessary for getting together an efficient band, is reckoned as about four years, of about three hours' daily practice. On my mentioning to M. Gauthier, the chef d'orchestre, himself a blind man, our desire to instruct sixteen of our pupils, so as to form a *band of instrumental performers*, he at once declared that it would be both an easy and practicable affair, with *three instructors*, one for each group of instruments; and with a proportionate decrease of expenditure as compared with the Paris school.

The question of a *brass band* has also been under the consideration of the French authorities; but as yet there have been many serious objections urged against its formation, in consequence of the expense of the instruments themselves, the loud and annoying sound during a long period of practising, and the tendency on the part of the blind to weakness of the lungs and respiratory organs. M. Gaudet has permitted me freely to translate or glean from his treatise on the subject all that may be requisite for me to lay before you. He considers that music occupies a great place in the education and life of the blind, although as yet little has been written on the subject; and he proceeds to examine the three following points: 1st. The musical aptitude of the blind; 2nd. Their means of musical instruction; 3rd. Musical notation.

I. *Musical Aptitude of the Blind.*

It has been long ago proved, says Mons. Guadet, that greater difficulties exist with the blind than with the seeing in all matters of education; and, for this reason, amongst the seeing, the organisations and capacities are totally different from those which exist amongst the blind; for there are peculiarities which multiply and singularly extend these difficulties. Certain blind people, for ex-

ample, remain affected all their lives with the causes which have produced blindness; amongst others, on the contrary, the cause is not felt until the moment it produces its effect. In one case, the visual organ is alone attacked; in the other, the brain suffers. This again is not all: the one has never seen the light of day; the other, probably, has enjoyed sight for years. The blind man who has once seen, knows the form and shape of things, the aspect of the mighty heavens, colours and their varieties, harmony or discord. The man born blind, is, however, ignorant of all those blessings; in a word, "the finger of the blind takes the place of the eye of the seeing, and becomes the instrument by which he acquires an immense amount of knowledge. The sensibility of the finger is not, however, always the same; it varies with the child of ten years, and the man of thirty; is acted on by the extremes of heat and cold, and is no longer the same in the rude artizan as in the delicate female. It is, therefore, as impossible to imagine a general type amongst the blind as amongst the seeing.

We must not, however, carry these differences too far, and, in avoiding one error, fall into another. For example, we are in the habit of saying, in general terms, that the loss of one sense turns to the advantage of others; that it leads to the development of those which are naturally wanted, if not to replace, at least in some way to supply, the deficiency. Thus we have but little doubt that the loss of vision, without exercising the slightest influence on the smell and the taste, does not necessarily, amongst the blind, develop the faculties of touch and hearing; though both these senses almost invariably become as necessary to them as sight to the seeing.

All the world knows that *touch supplies the blind with eyes*; it is by touch that they know the forms of external objects.; it is by running their fingers over the raised, embossed alphabetical characters that the assembly of syllables, words, and phrases, is

distinguished; while by the same operation they ascertain the position of different countries on their globes or geographical maps; but it is more difficult for those who have not lived amongst the blind to understand how far the sense of *hearing* can replace the lost sense, and how often the blind call into use that faculty where we should use our eyes, for the ear becomes a far more important help to them than we should at first imagine. Look how that blind man walks; watch with what assurance he directs his steps to a particular spot. Hark, he hears a sound close to him; it is the rattle of a carriage followed by a regiment of soldiers. He hears the beating of the drum; he is troubled; stops, he knows not where to go, for he fears to run against the one, or to be injured by the other.

It is by the *sound of his own step* that he has been guided, and that no longer serves as his faithful monitor. If you ask him the reason of his failing confidence, he will tell you that he *heard* the wind of the noise before it actually touched him; or, like one of the blind professors of the French school, will assure you that the sound of the drum was as though a *thick fog* had risen around him.

If a blind man enters an apartment, he will say at once if it is small or large, if he is at the entrance, the middle, or the side of the room, and whether he has sufficient space to walk either right or left. The sound of his step and voice assures him of all this. On the other hand, if the room is carpeted, the walls hung with pictures or silk, he then walks with hesitation, as the sound of his step and voice is deadened, because his usual landmarks fail him.

It is, therefore, certain that the organ of hearing, with the blind, acquires a development and an incontestible sensibility and superiority over the same sense amongst the seeing.

Some would assert that acuteness of hearing has but little to do with the formation of musical taste, and that it contributes nothing to the musical feeling. We would throw out, as a suggestion,

however, that an organ unusually sensitive, more developed and more complete, ought necessarily to lead to impressions more delicate, more tender and more perfect than in ordinary individuals. Such we have always found to be the case amongst the blind. Let us examine the question more in detail, and ascertain if the blind really possess a more profound musical taste than the seeing.

First. If we find amongst the blind a memory for music far exceeding that of seeing persons, if this musical memory is out of all proportion to the seeing, except with those endowed with a musical organization above the average, it stands to reason that the musical sentiment of the blind is more developed than among us. We offer three examples. One of the professors of the Institution of Paris, M. Grosjean, plays the clarinette and flute and fills the office of teacher of the class of hautboy, horn, bassoon, trombone, and cornet, and is at the same time the most active member of the orchestra, as professor and '*repeater*' of wind instruments. He knows by heart all the methods of the various instruments above named, an enormous mass of musical composition, besides eight or ten different concerted pieces and separate lessons, and the entire repertoire of the orchestra. He is also chief of the orchestra, maître de chapelle, professor of harmony and of the organ. As chief of the orchestra, he also knows the music of each part, note by note. It will thus be unnecessary for us to be musicians to understand that the scores of four or five symphonies of Mozart, Haydn, or Beethoven, and other varied productions of different classic masters, together with two or more masses, accompaniments, as solos or as appertaining to a great orchestra, require great musical talent to understand and remember them. As maître de chapelle, Mr. Gauthier also possesses a great repertoire of vocal and instrumental music for three or four performers; and, as organist, he retains in his memory all the pieces that are executed.

But why should we allude to the professors, when mere pupils

are such proficient? They almost all study, at the same time, the pianoforte and the instrument on which they perform in concert. They know their parts as members of the orchestra (an attainment more difficult than the knowledge of vocal music) in several different symphonies, overtures, entire masses, and accompaniments to vocal choruses; sometimes the more advanced not only know their several parts, but write them in the varied methods of musical notation.

How is it possible that such results should be obtained, if the blind have not a special musical organization, a sentiment of harmony "tout exceptionnel?"

Secondly. There are other proofs of this profound musical sentiment than those already adduced. Let us take an *orchestra of seeing persons*, with a distinguished leader and clever executants. The chief gives the time and period of commencement, and the performance begins. We know full well the work he has to keep them going, how he flourishes his baton, and how anxiously he watches all around him, how he urges on one, and suppresses the vigor of another. If one player gets out of time, the scramble and confusion that ensue make it almost impossible, be he ever so clever, to re-establish harmony. Look, on the other hand, at an *orchestra of blind musicians*. The chief gives the movement of the piece and all is accomplished. It is steadily and correctly played to its termination with unerring correctness.

Why is it that blind persons have this immense superiority over the seeing? The answer is simple enough. They are deprived of that which comes to us by sight; but they rely more upon sound than we do under similar circumstances. In our theatres, in our fêtes, we employ our eye-sight more than our hearing. On the contrary, the blind man sees, as it were, only by his auditory nerve. He receives only the impressions that can come to him through that organ, and these are necessarily more penetrating because he has less

to distract that one particular sense. It may be asked, why, if the blind possess this extraordinary talent, have not some of them become renowned musicians or composers?

The answer to this question may be comprised in the fact that until very lately they have been but little educated, and that in a very small proportion to the seeing (about one in fifteen thousand). The institution of *Les Jeunes Aveugles*, at Paris, is the only blind school in France, in which there are as many as one hundred and eighty pupils; whilst in the ordinary schools there are nearly three millions of seeing children under instruction. Thus it happens that the proportion is too small to admit of frequent extraordinary proficiency. Let us contrast the musical instruction in the Blind School with that of the *Conservatoire de Music* in Paris.

The Imperial Institution for the Blind has for its object the instruction of blind children according to their tastes in the acquirement of a trade, an art, or a liberal profession. The duration of the course of study is spread over eight years, and the pupils are divided into two sections—those who have been admitted within four years, and those who have passed that term. The pupils of the first class follow the course of primary instruction in the theory and practice of music, and in the acquirement of a trade. In the second class, they are instructed in the higher intellectual studies, both musical and educational, and the perfections of their trade. It is the pupils of this second division who chiefly succeed in music and in the higher branches of art.

In the *Conservatoire de Music*, however, every pupil who presents himself for admission is obliged to possess a more than ordinary capacity for music. They are examined by a competent board, who determine as to their capabilities. They then, after two years and a half of constant study and practice, compete for prizes, having been obliged, during that long period, to attend daily, for practice and instruction, from nine to eleven, from half-past eleven to half-past one, and from two to four.

It is no longer difficult to understand the disadvantages under which the Blind labour, as compared with the seeing, and why perfection is the result of the teaching of the Conservatoire, whilst mediocrity is the result of the Blind-school instruction. The Conservatoire selects the most prominent pupils at the outset, and labours to make them finished performers; whilst the School, on the contrary, receives children of all capacities, particularly those who are entirely ignorant, whom they are obliged, in many instances, to unteach what they have previously learned, and to divide their time between ordinary elementary instruction, musical study, and manual labour, at least for the first four years of their residence. In the last four years, again, only a portion of time can be devoted to music; as every pupil has to perfect himself in a trade by which he can gain a living.

We can now understand how, under the present difficulties, the Blind are unable to compete, as musicians, with the seeing. More time ought to be devoted by the blind to music, and a longer residence in the institution, under instruction, permitted. Opportunities ought to be afforded for the blind to attend concerts of vocal and instrumental music; and they ought to be brought in contact with proficient in the art of composition and musical excellence, and be patronized and encouraged, not only by the charitable, but by the Government. Then the true musical capabilities of the blind would be developed, and then would be seen their real talent for music.

II. *The Mode of Musical Instruction amongst the Blind.*

Nature has deprived the blind of many faculties which she has freely given to the seeing, though, in music, she has made them their equal, if not their superior. . Ought we not, therefore, to

instruct them more carefully in the art, if they show the least taste for harmony or music? Such, however, is but seldom the case; as, in the major part of the Institutions for the blind, music holds but a secondary place in the general instruction which they afford. In the German schools, the directors have almost ignored the possibility of making music a career for the blind, and have paid but little attention to its cultivation. It was long before the Paris Institution gave due consideration to the study of music; and even the illustrious founder, Valentin Haüy, believed that music could only furnish amusement, and not a means of livelihood for the blind.

“Our Institution,” says he, “is, in its origin, a vast workshop, in which the different artists and workmen may, from time to time, relieve the tedium of their occupations by singing;” and he even goes so far as to excuse the practice of singing during work hours.

In the year 1823 or 24, however, the blind professor, *Montal*, was desired to organize a class for musical instruction. Up to this period, some of the pupils had taught themselves a few airs on the organ or pianoforte, but no class of composition or harmony had been in existence. These few players had occasionally received some advice, in some cases a few lessons, from professors, who had taken a particular and individual interest in their misfortune. It was reserved, however, for M. Marius, Mr. Poissant, and Mr. Gauthier (the blind professor before named), to organise a class of harmony.

At the same period, the idea of instrumentation was conceived and highly patronized by many celebrated musicians of that day; such as Madame Vander Burch (piano), M. Habeneck (violin), Jubin, Croisille, and Becquie (violin), Benazet, Guillon, and Berbiguier, Dauprat, Veni, Dacostee, &c. &c. all of whom visited the Institution from time to time, and gave pupils the advantage of their experience.

The theory of music and instruction on the organ were then, as now, considered of the greater importance, though the utility of

the instrumental band in teaching time and precision and affording variety is incalculable.

The mode of instruction, as pursued in l'Institut des Jeunes Aveugles, at Paris, is as follows :

First Year. Elementary class of *Solfège*. Those who enter this class are usually fresh comers, and know neither how to write or read. They are obliged to be taught the signification and form of letters, the system of notation, and the writing symbols of M. Bridlle. The seeing would at once begin the Solfège, without having such impediments, and would of course be put to the theory and practice of musical composition. The blind, on the contrary, learn first the principles, long before they are thoroughly masters of the written characters.

The professor begins, in his *first class*, to teach the general principles of music, and the elementary theory of the solfège; first, by singing a line, and teaching the measure of the combined notes; the name and value of each note, the alterations, if there are any, together with the rests. If the professor sings, for instance, the first line of *Vive Henri IV*, the pupil is instructed to say: *Two Four*—LA black, LA quaver, LA quaver — bar of measure — *sol* black, *sol* quaver, *ut* quaver — bar of measure — *si* quaver, *la* quaver, *sol* quaver, *la* quaver—bar of measure—*mi*. black (*pointée*), *demi* rest — bar of measure. Secondly. The other exercises consist in learning by heart the air of which the professor calls out the notes, together with the tone and proper measure of the piece. These exercises are reversed, and the theory and analysis of each bar is practically learned.

Second Year. Second class of Solfège. In this class is developed the theory, the basis of which has been taught in the first class; the exercises in composition and resolution; and the re-composition of musical phrases. Reading at sight (touch). The study of instruments is also commenced, together with instructions

on the piano, the organ, and the harmonium, the violin, violoncello, flute, clarinet, hautboy, &c.

Third Year. Class of Perfection. In this, the principles of the solfège, modulations, and transposition, by memory, are attempted. The exercises of writing, and audition, and touch playing, are taught; and reading and writing higher musical productions. The system employed by the seeing is also at this period taught them; for should they in after years be brought in contact with seeing musicians, they thus have a system in common.

Fourth Year. Vocalisation. This is divided into two classes:

1. In which simple singing only is taught.
2. In which choral music is employed.

The instruction also in instrumental music is now much attended to. It is usually carried out in the following manner:

For the piano, the execution is particularly studied, and the gamut of all the different instruments is taught by the professor, and the practice presided over by him. One can understand that the pupil now employs his memory to a great extent in the performance, though he *learns* the *air* from the embossed music which he may have himself collected; though this system of notation is somewhat complicated, as the pupil can only, in practising, employ one hand at a time, the other being employed in reading the passage.

Arrived at the end of the fourth year, it becomes necessary to determine the definite direction of the pupils' tastes. Those who have the means of existence follow their own inclinations in continuing their musical studies; the others, who are obliged to work at manual labour for their living, and who have no particular taste for music, relax in their attendance at the more advanced classes. The instruction proceeds in the fourth and fifth classes, and harmony and composition are thoroughly taught. They mostly follow the methods used by the seeing. They work for two years at in-

strumentation, careful study of the pieces and the string and wind instruments.

In the *seventh and eighth years*, special examinations are instituted. If the taste of any particular pupil inclines to the organ, his time is especially devoted to that instrument. Playing in concert and assisting in the practice of the band are unceasingly and daily persevered in, and the wonderful proficiency of the pupils in the performance of concerted instrumental music is too well known to need comment here.

The orchestra of the Paris blind school demands our special notice. The professors of the Institution form the nucleus. The one who is at the same time chief of the orchestra is also professor of the first violin; another of the second violin; a third and fourth, the violoncello and bass; a fifth, the contra basso; a sixth, the first clarionet; a seventh, the first flute; and the eighth, the trombone. All these professors aid in the instruction and performance of the band, which is not considered complete without them. The band consisted, at the time M. Guadet first wrote his report, of

3 first violins,	2 flutes,	1 trombone,
3 second violins,	2 clarionets,	1 ophicleide,
2 alto violins,	2 hautboys,	timbrels,
4 basses,	1 bassoon,	large drums,
2 contra bassi,	3 horns,	triangle.

30 performers in all. The number, however, as we have before stated, is at this period augmented to 36 performers—many new pupils having lately been admitted as members of the band.

The mode in which they execute a piece of music, overture or solo with orchestral accompaniments, is the following. Their chief writes the notes of the morceau to be performed; reads with his finger, from the raised music, the first bar of the score of the first and second violins; this is taken up by the blind pupil, who pro-

duces the bar upon his instrument ; and thus the master is enabled to judge whether it has been properly understood. He does the same with the second violin, the altos, and the bass, and for the other instruments. The bar or movement is then played in concert, and the proper time and measure determined upon. The next bar is studied in the same manner, and so on throughout the piece.

At the next rehearsal, he continues his instruction, and then he puts together the various morceaux that have been learned during the two sittings. He then superintends the practice and rehearsal of the entire orchestra, until it is able, *by memory*, to perform the "motive" with precision.

If we consider the advantages of this mode of instruction, we shall find that it is infinitely more profitable for the blind than the rapid and mechanical execution so valued by the seeing. It evidently becomes for them a study of observation and analysis, and, at the same time, of harmony and composition.

We have often witnessed the astonishment of really great musicians at the precision and correctness with which this orchestra perform many of their pieces. It is with difficulty that seeing players can be brought to understand how the executants can remember their different parts, know when to stop, and where again to resume their accompaniment—how each instrument and each part are completely under control, and how they succeed in proper time and proper measure. All this is done with a precision and an enthusiasm seldom witnessed in an orchestra of seeing performers, spite of the well-waved baton of its leader, or the well-written score of each instrumentalist. It is precisely because the Blind need not this assistance, and require neither baton, score, nor music to read from, that they play with more precision and correctness than the seeing ; because they entirely abandon themselves to their innate musical feeling, which enables them to reproduce their several parts with feeling and spirit. They neither require a signal to mark the time

or pauses, nor is it necessary to lead them, as in an ordinary orchestra. They are so entirely identified with the rest of the orchestra, that they play instinctively. This, no doubt, is the reason why a blind orchestra is more effective than the same number of seeing performers.

The difference between blind and seeing musicians will now be pretty well understood. The blind are obliged to learn by heart all the music they attempt to play, whilst the seeing often execute at sight. The first, though they may play but little, are yet thoroughly conversant with every portion of their study, and well grounded in its theory; whilst the second read rapidly and execute fluently, but may understand or retain little of what they so hastily acquire. The blind become proficient analyzers, whilst the seeing are often little else than successful flourishers.

This difference in the mode of proceeding of the blind and seeing artists ought to be productive of corresponding differences in the character of their talent. The blind are doubtless the greater masters of harmony; because they give more thought to the subject, and are rather *analyzers* of composition than executants. In their melodies, less variety and less richness of imagination will be distinguished, but more originality; because they know a less quantity of music than the seeing.

The blind, when they compose, do so perhaps in a more learned manner than the seeing, though without their profound taste and brilliancy.

There are, however, few rules without exceptions.

ON THE

DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF MUSICAL NOTATION.

Though the blind are able simultaneously to *read* and *sing* any piece of embossed music, their hands cannot repose at one and the same period on paper and manipulate a musical instrument. *Tangible musical notation* is therefore of but little real value, when compared with tangible typography. Nevertheless, we must remember that embossed musical notation is employed to a great degree throughout the Continental schools. During the long period in which the various systems have been tried, those for singing classes have been attended with the greatest advantages. We have, in consequence, sought to determine the best methods for universal adoption in vocal as well as instrumental scores. It is not proposed to consider, in this paper, all the curious and ingenious plans that have been from time to time experimented on throughout England and America. Those only will be glanced at which have been tried, since the time of Valeiden Haüy, in the blind schools of France. Haüy employed the ordinary alphabetical Roman character, and likewise availed himself of many of the musical signs used by seeing musicians. A great success attended his endeavours, *though his system of musical notation was speedily abandoned*, for the following reasons.

His notes, signs of silence, and bars of measure, presented embarrassing complications to the fingers of the blind. Their touch could only comprehend a few of his points, and they were thus unable to understand the practical utility of his system, or even, with immense difficulty, be brought to comprehend the 2, 3, or 4 lines of each bar, or the time and quality of notes. Again, the finger was obliged to *search for notes above and below the lines* ;

and when the *head* of the note was found, it was then necessary to determine the *end* of the same, and *vice versd.* The ordinary embossed musical notation was, however, soon abandoned in France, and M. Marcellin Legrand tried for many years to retain the *ordinary musical notation of the seeing*, in the instruction of the blind.

The system for seeing musicians was, however, doubtless only created for *the man with eyes* ; and it became necessary to invent a plan applicable *only to the fingers*—a system deprived of all complications, and composed of detached signs easily detected by the touch, and *ranged on one line only*. Many young masters and pupils of L'Institut des Jeunes Aveugles, M. Marjolin, Charru, Montal, and Moulin, gave their earnest attention to so desirable an end, and at length adopted the plan of ROUSSEAU ; *but the multiplicity of small signs which he also employed* throughout his system rendered the reading by touch somewhat difficult, as we shall find, after a careful analysis of his Tangible Notation.

ROUSSEAU'S SYSTEM.

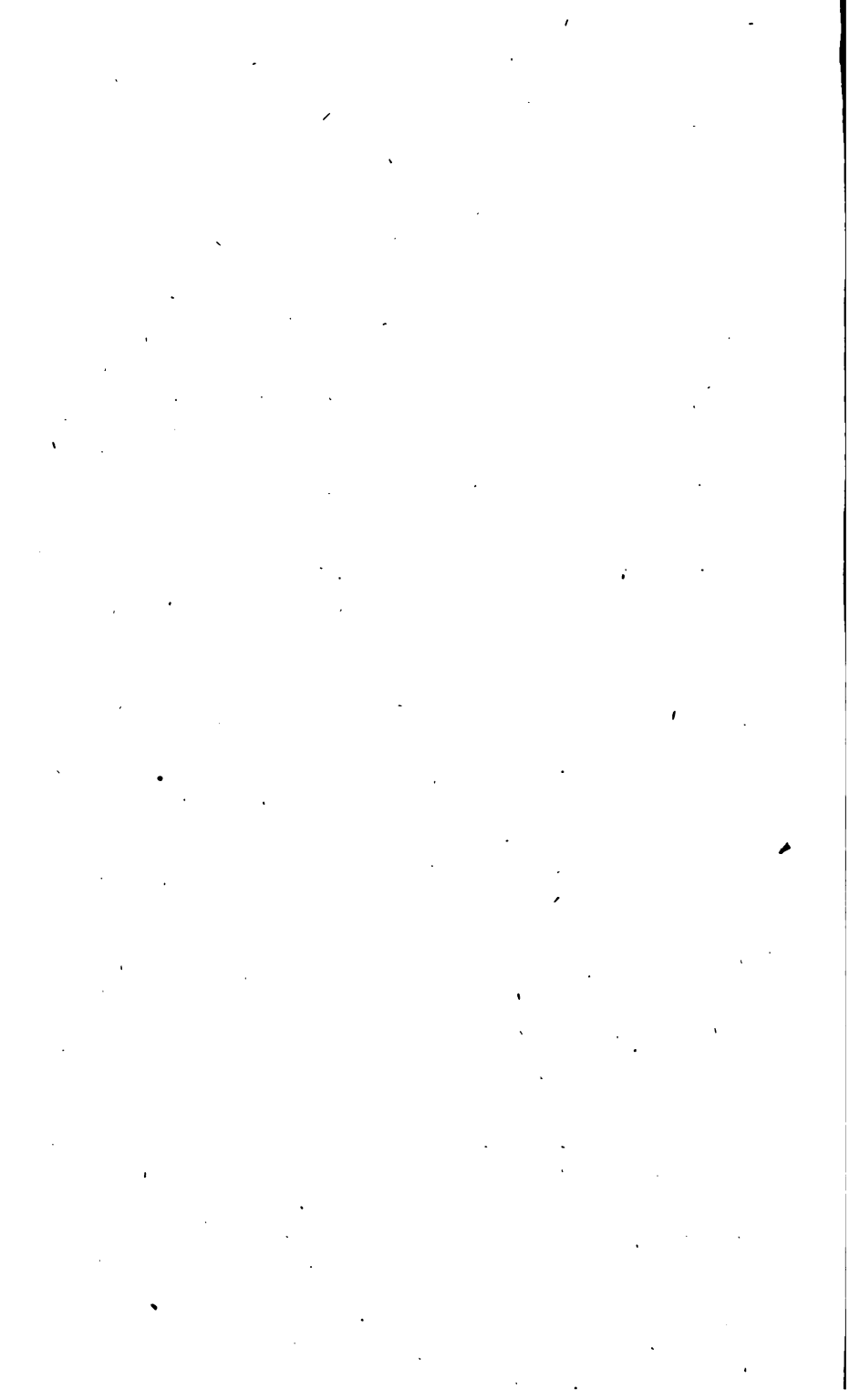
In this system the twenty-five letters of the alphabet are employed, together with the vowels having *grave* accents appended to these five letters ; *a* is the note most bass, *b* follows, &c. There are thus thirty notes, and a little more than four octaves. These thirty letters, however, were found insufficient to represent all the notes employed in music, and recourse was had to a key (key of *ut* or *sol*), which might be raised or depressed at will. The key of *ut* is thus expressed (U), the letter *a* representing *ut* placed between the second and the third line in the key of *fa* 4th ; to the key of *sol*, which is represented thus (S) ; the same letter corresponded with *sol* on the second line to the key of *sol*. To the key of *ut*, the notes *ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*, *si*, are represented at the

ROUSSEAU'S SYSTEM
OF MUSICAL NOTATION FOR THE BLIND.



LE GRAND ROI DAGOBERT.





first octave by *a, b, c, d, e, f, g*; the second octave by *h, i, j, n, l, m, n*; the third, by *o, p, q, r, s, t, u*; and the fourth, by *v, x, y, z, à, è, ì*. If it is desired to heighten the key by one or two octaves, then the U indicating the key is marked by the apposition of one or more *o*'s; in this manner—(Uo), (Uoo): whilst, if the piece is to be written in a lower octave, then a large O is appended; thus, (UOO), (UO). The signs of alterations of the keys are represented by placing a *d* between parentheses—thus, (U) (*d*); the flat by a (*b*); the sharp by (“). If there are several signs of alteration, the letter or the quotation points are preceded or followed by a number—thus, (U) (2 d), (U) (3 b), (U) (4 “). The fortuitous or accidental sharps, &c. in a piece of music are indicated by the capital letters, and by the vowels with a *circumflex* accent, instead of a *grave* accent—(U) *a*, (B) *a é*, &c. The flats, by the capital letters reversed, and by the vowels with a *circumflex* accent, also reversed—(U) *a*, & *a p*. The accidental sharps are preceded by quotation points—(U) *a “*. The double sharp, by an algebraic figure, thus \times , placed before the note; the double flat by +.

The measure is marked in figures: the measure of “deux temps,” by a 2; “trois temps,” by 3; “quatre temps,” by 4: — $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, &c.

The value of the notes is known by the division of the measure, and by the space allowed between each subdivision. First—all notes placed between two bars of measure or time indicate the entire time. (U) 4 *a | b |* the white 0 followed by a quadrat—(U) 4 *a b |*; the black by a large space which is the third of a quadrat—(U) 4 *a b c d |*. The quaver is followed by a space less large, half of the larger space—(U) 4 *a b c d e f g h |*; the double quaver, by a very small space—(U) 4 *d a b c d e f g h d e f g h i j |*; but as there are in some instances many quavers following one another, either simple, triolets, or the marks of time

by tune—"on met après chaque temps l'espace qui suit la noire." The double simples, the double triplets, the triple simples, and triple triplets, &c. are also marked by *time*. The pointed and double pointed notes are, as in the ordinary system of the seeing, followed by one or two points. Thus a white pointed note stands written (U) 4 *a b* | ; a white, (U) 4 *a.—b* | .

The signs of silence, or rests, are thus marked: a pause, 1 ; a demi-pause, 2 ; soupir, 3 : and also pointed like the notes.

Chords are marked by an apostrophe placed between these notes—(U) 4 *a' c' e'* | . If these notes are of different value, then they are accented below.

The junction of two or three notes is marked by a line of union; thus, (U) 4 *a—| b c—d | e—f—g h |* . If more than three notes, then they are placed between parentheses—(U) 4 (*a b c d*).

"La trille" is indicated by an asterisk placed before the note—(U) 4 *a b c *d*. The note to be dwelt on or flourished, is preceded by an S; thus, (U) 4 *a S b c S d |* . The little note, by a comma placed before the note; thus, (U) 4 *,h g ,f e ,d e*. The "*nuance*," or expression, by the following signs, always placed *before* the note—*forte!* *piano!* Notes augmented, ; ;—notes diminished, > ; crescendo, < . The same reversed indicates contrary expression. The signs which indicate expression are the same as in ordinary musical notation; thus, (U) 4 *a c è c | = | b d f d = | f h j h = = = | = | = |* .

The fingering is expressed by the first five cyphers, reversed and placed before the notes.

"The system which we have now considered," says M. Guadet, "has the advantage of being well adapted to the understanding of blind persons, as they can run their reading finger along a line of music, printed on this system, with as much facility as they read an ordinary book of prose, the music being printed in the ordinary Ger-

man letter." With all these advantages, however, it has *many grave imperfections*. *The time is indicated in too vague a manner, and the finger might easily mistake a crotchet for a quaver, or a double for a triple measure*. Nevertheless, many books have been printed on this plan, and are even now considered by some as extremely useful.

Notwithstanding the great experience which M. Guadet possesses in this matter, we are obliged to differ from him as to the practicability of this system. It is alike complicated for the blind and the seeing, and instead of *music made easy*, it goes far to render the study *almost an impossibility* for blind persons. The ordinary musical notation in use amongst the seeing is far easier of comprehension, and has this great advantage, that the seeing can assist their blind brethren without having recourse to an arbitrary and useless combination of the ordinary letters of the alphabet.

SYSTÈME BRAILLE.

Since Monsieur Braille has successfully arranged a system of writing by means of raised points (first conceived by M. Barbier), and has brought musical notation to the same degree of perfection as that of typography, the various institutions of France have almost unanimously adopted his mode of instruction. Those blind persons who have given attention to the system of pointed musical notation, are loud in its praise, and prefer it to any other as yet invented; for they have been heard to declare, "that as they read the embossed points more easily than the ordinary typography, why should not musical notation and printing be carried out in the same manner. "Ce serait pour nous un immense avantage."

In the *pointed musical system* of M. Braille, now so generally adopted in France, Germany, Spain, and Switzerland, the first ten letters of the pointed alphabet are almost entirely employed to

represent the various musical notes and octaves. A reference to the diagrams will facilitate the explanation of this system.

In the ordinary pointed writing, M. Braille makes use of the variations of : : dots to represent the ten first letters of the alphabet a · b : c · · d · : e · · f : · g : : h : · i · j : ·

The other letters are variations of this form $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot\cdot \\ \cdot\cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ —thus, b $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ p $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$

v $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ y $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ Thus all the letters of the alphabet are expressed by

three horizontal lines of two dots each.

Having become familiar with the pointed system, as applied to the ordinary letters of the alphabet, the blind man has but little difficulty in understanding the same arrangement of points as applied to musical notation. Let us now glance at M. Braille's *musical system*. No key is employed ; but the seven notes, *ut, ré, mi, far, sol, la, si*, are represented by the corresponding signs of the letters ; thus,

$\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ d | $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ e | $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ f | $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ g | $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ h | $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ i | $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ j | The two first or upper

lines of dots are alone used in these seven notes.

These notes are arranged in seven different octaves, and their value is indicated by a point placed immediately before the note ;

thus: Ut, in seven octaves, $\begin{smallmatrix} \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$ $\begin{smallmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 \\ \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \end{smallmatrix}$

The *sol*, of the key of that name in the ordinary system of music, is thus represented : : . If there are several following notes belonging to the same octave, it is sufficient to place the *dot* indicative of the octave before the first of these notes.

ÉCRITURE À L'USAGE DES AVEUGLES,

PROCÉDÉ DE MONS. L. BRAILLE,

PROFESSEUR À L'INSTITUTE DES JEUNES AVEUGLES, À PARIS.



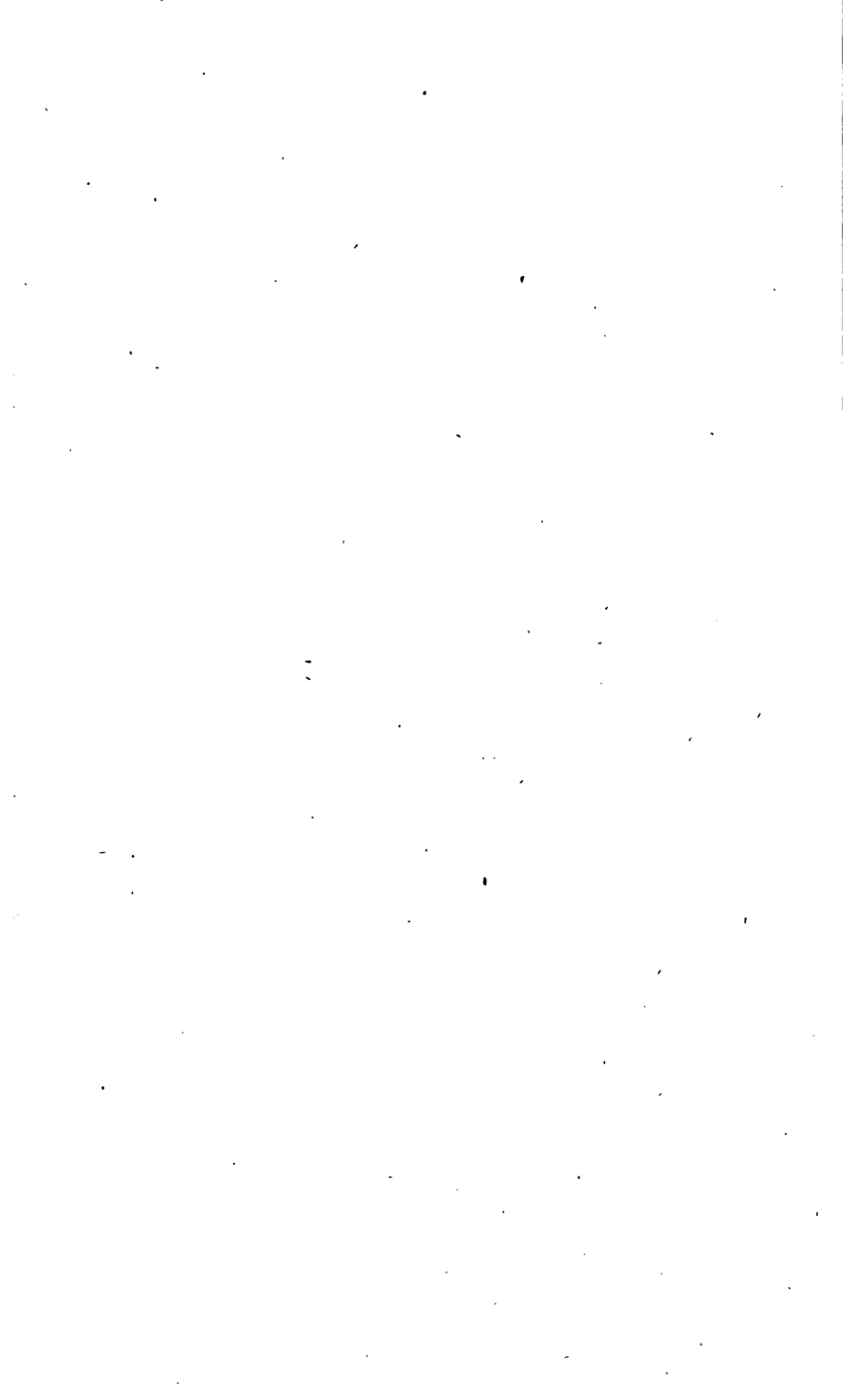
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0

K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

U	V	X	Y	Z	ç oin	é	à	è	ù ien
---	---	---	---	---	----------	---	---	---	----------

an	in	on	un	eu	ou	oi	ch	gn	u
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,	:	î ian	ò ion	œ ien	signe des nombres.
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Suite du procédé L. Braille. Musique.

Notes et Valeurs.

	ut	ré	mi	fa	sol	la	si
	ut	ré	mi	fa	sol	la	si
	ut	ré	mi	fa	sol	la	si
	ut	ré	mi	fa	sol	la	si

Silences et Alterations Musicales.

1 ^{re} 8 ^{ve}	2 ^{me} 8 ^{ve}	3 ^{me} 8 ^{ve}	4 ^{me} 8 ^{ve}	5 ^{me} 8 ^{ve}	6 ^{me} 8 ^{ve}	7 ^{me} 8 ^{ve}

Accords

(4)	2 ^{de}	3 ^{ce}	4 ^{te}	5 ^{te}	6 ^{te}	7 ^{me}	8 ^{ve}

Doigtes

(5)	1 ^{er}	2 ^{me}	3 ^{me}	4 ^{me}	5 ^{me}	(7)	Avec	(8)

(13) Signe de paroles

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(11) Marche

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

(13) P PP F X

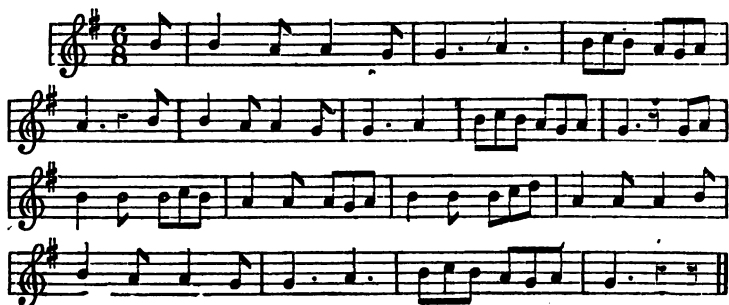
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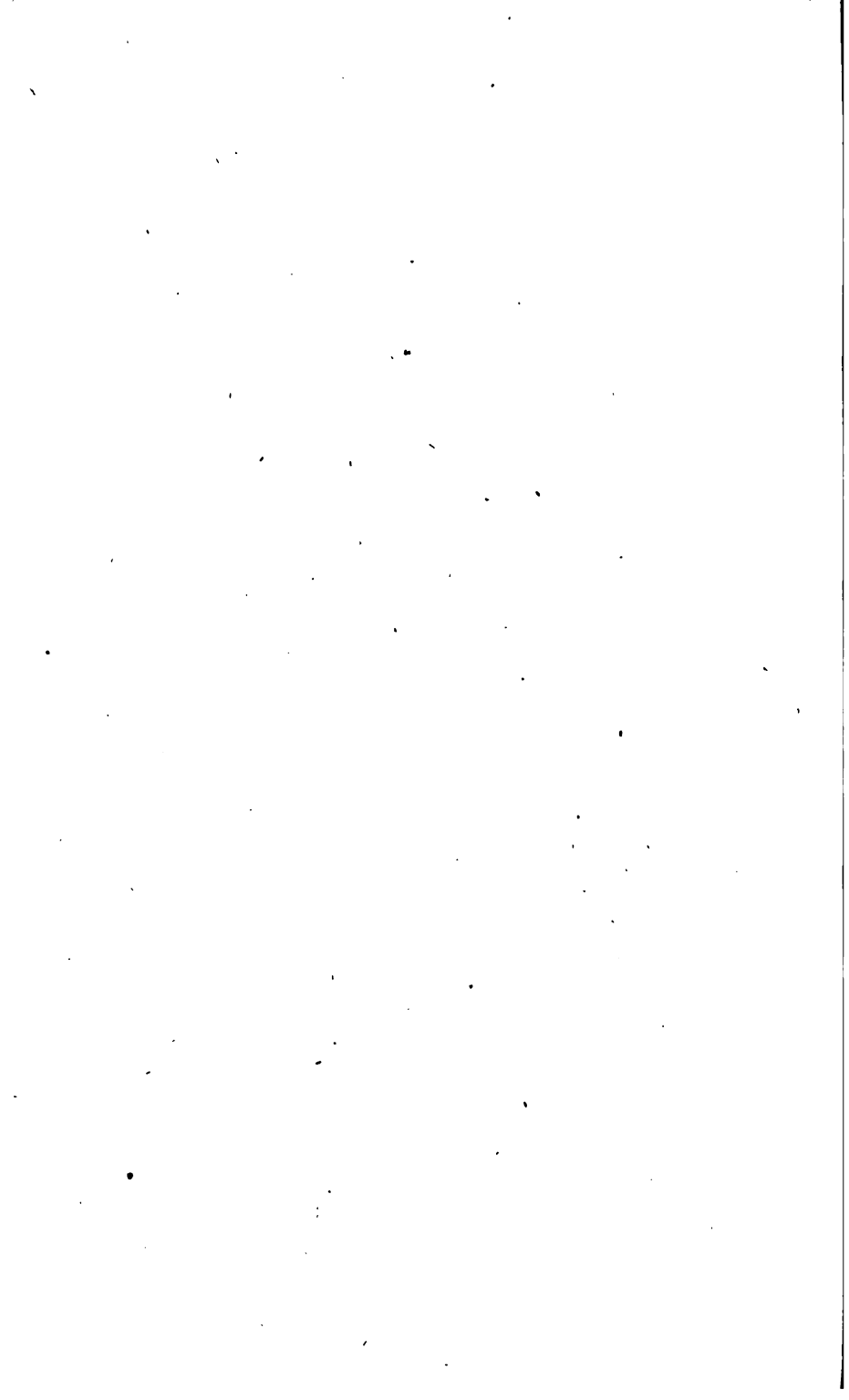


BRAILLE'S SYSTEM
OF MUSICAL NOTATION FOR THE BLIND.



LE GRAND ROI DAGOBERT.





The signs of alteration at the head of the piece indicate its key.

Sharp · · Flat $\left[\begin{array}{c} \cdot \\ \cdot \end{array} \right]$ Sharp · two Sharps · · two Flats : · ·

These same accidental alterations are placed before the notes which they modify.

The value of a note is thus represented: the rest, by two points placed on the third line underneath the note; the white, by a point to the left on the third line; the black, by a point to the right; the quaver, being left without any points below it, on the third line

thus : ut (ronde) · · ut (white) · · ut (black) · · ut (quaver) · ·

The double, triple, quadruple, and quintuple quaver is written like the rest, the white, the black, and the quaver. This may appear at first sight embarrassing, though the simple inspection of the measure of the bar will at once explain the apparent difficulty.

The value of single pointed notes is indicated by a point placed on the *third line after* the note; the double pointed notes, by two points on the second and third lines; and before a set of triplets, two dots and a wide blank *without dots* shows the end of the measure.

A pause · · a demi-pause · le soupir · le demi-soupir · ·

Measure or time is marked by the points which stand for *numbers* in the alphabet of Braille—(vide diagram). With regard to *chords*, the interval of second is thus marked, · thirds

fourths · fifths · placed at the second and third lines, and so on.

Example :

ut, mi, black — · · $\left| \begin{array}{c} \cdot \\ \cdot \end{array} \right|$ ut, mi, sol, ut, white — · · $\left| \begin{array}{c} \cdot \\ \cdot \end{array} \right|$ · $\left| \begin{array}{c} \cdot \\ \cdot \end{array} \right|$ · · $\left| \begin{array}{c} \cdot \\ \cdot \end{array} \right|$ · ·

To indicate the partition or separation of music, perpendicular

dots are placed, more in number than three, thus :
 :
 :
 :
 :

The conversion of the value of the quavers is thus marked :

$\begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \hline \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \hline \cdot & \cdot & \cdot \\ \hline \end{array}$ after the notes.

Example :

Ut, white $\cdot \cdot \cdot$ quaver, white $\cdot \cdot \cdot$ double quaver $\cdot \cdot \cdot$ &c.

. . When a measure, or a part of a measure, ought to be repeated
 . . are placed on the second or third line as many times as the bar
 is to be played over.

These are the principal signs necessary to be expressed in these pages. The curious, who may be anxious further to examine this system, are referred to M. Guadet's book, or to the excellent diagram of M. Braille, appended to these remarks.

Such is the second system of musical notation employed in France ; and, as M. Guadet observes, "if placed before the seeing musician, it would probably be considered a most complicated affair ; as the eye would become puzzled amid all these points, and much time and attention would be required for a thorough appreciation of their importance. It is also, at first, a puzzling system for the blind, *as the complications of the points are actually real complications to them.*" A single point out of its proper place becomes a stumbling-block to the proper appreciation of a whole piece.

With these disadvantages, however, the blind in France *like* the system ; as they possess in it one that they can easily employ, which takes up but little space, and which, after study and practice, they can more easily understand than the ordinary raised musical notation of

lines and spaces. They can read it easily and quickly, and have but little difficulty in feeling the points.

Though, at first sight, the arrangements of these points may present difficulties to the seeing, yet we must remember that, in France at least, *points* are the ordinary letters of the blind, and therefore half the difficulty is remedied in a blind reader of M. Braille's system. The precision with which the pupils at the Institution des Jeunes Aveugles at Paris read and acquire musical instruction by this method, speaks volumes in its favour, and will furnish our Committee with stronger proof of its applicability than anything I might urge on its behalf. That its arbitrary character is a great disadvantage I freely allow; though a system which produces such great results must contain within itself some elements worthy of consideration, and, though apparently complicated, be deserving of trial.

Many French blind children possess large and well-assorted collections of the finest morceaux of the best masters. They point their own scores, and carry about with them, in a small compass, masses, overtures, and concerted pieces, which they study in private, whilst they take a pride in being their own embossers and instructors. Many also compose, in writing, without the aid of the professors, and thus another amusement is afforded them.

The two systems which have been so fully described are not the only ones employed in the blind schools of France. M. Maurice Bourge and Mons. Dufau have both of them produced ingenious systems of musical notation, though, on trial, they have been found inadequate to the requirements of the blind.

Mons. Guadet, by a most ingenious combination of all the other systems, has succeeded in the discovery of a method in which not only the dotted marks of Mons. Braille, but the alphabetical system of Mons. Rousseau, can be blended together.

M. GUADET'S SYSTEM.

Mons. Guadet considers his plan as productive of great precision in the execution of musical compositions, and boasts of its simplicity as compared with all the other systems which we have been considering. He thus describes it :

As in the system of Braille, no key is expressed. The seven notes, *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si*, are represented by the letters *a, e, i, o, u, v, x*—the octave being known by the addition of the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. *Example: Ut* in seven octaves—1 a, 2 a, 3 a, 4 a, 5 a, 6 a, 7 a.

If there be several notes belonging to the same octave following one another, it is sufficient to write the cypher of the octave before the first of those notes. The gamut is therefore the same as the ordinary system of music amongst the seeing.

The alphabetical arrangement of letters for the notes of each octave, and the numerals in the scale of octaves, thus form a more simple plan than that proposed by Braille or Rousseau.

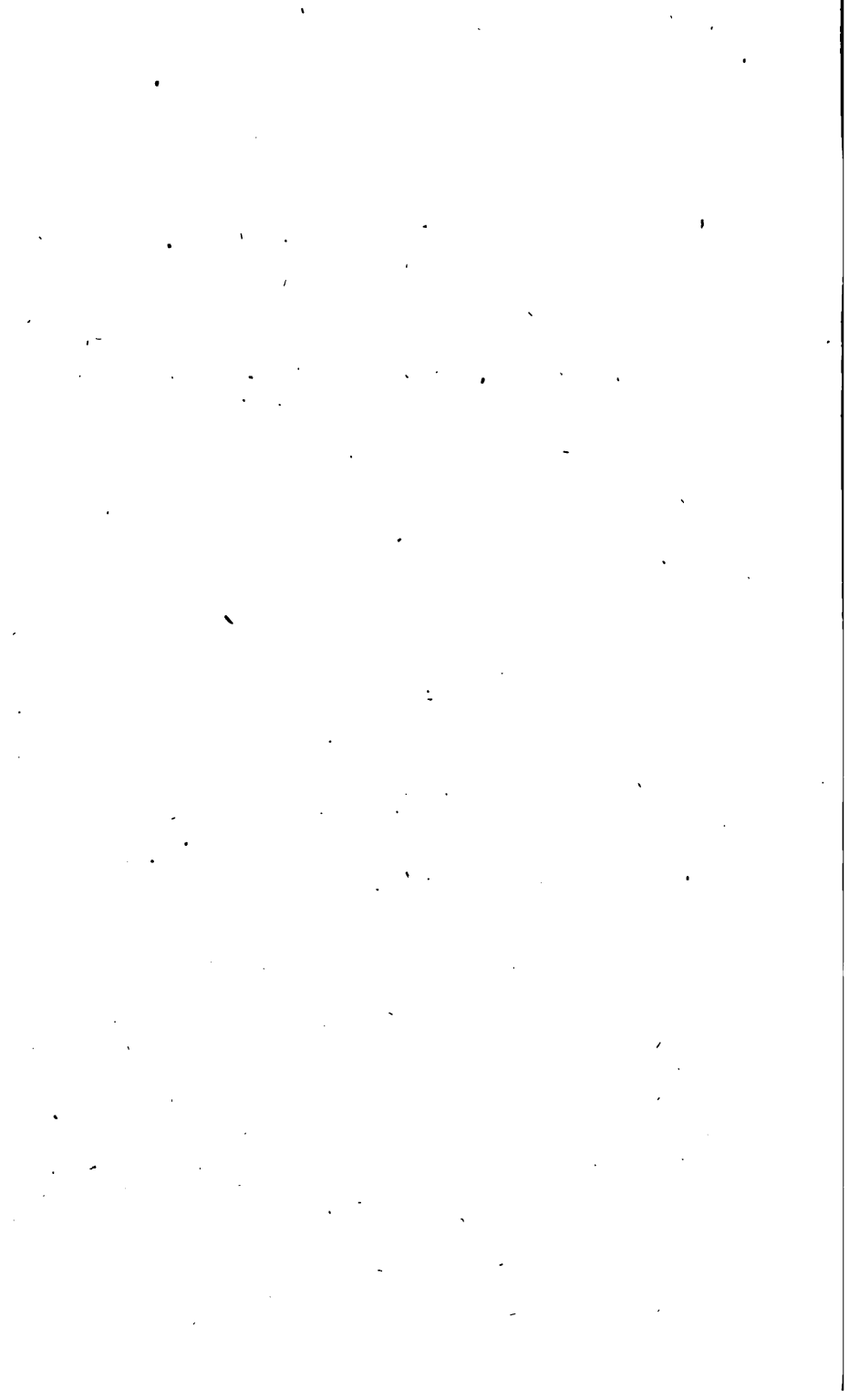
The rest is indicated by diæresis placed over a Roman letter representing the note : thus, *ü* ; the white, by a circumflex accent ; the black, by a grave accent ; the quaver, by a simple letter ; the double, triple, quadruple, and quintuple, by the same accents placed over italic letters ; thus, *Ut* is written in all its value, *ä á à a, ä á à a*. The value of notes is also represented by points placed before them ; thus, . : a .a . .

The signs of alteration, sharps, flats, double sharps, and double flats, placed at the beginning, &c. are written as in the musical notation of the seeing. The small notes are indicated by small letters placed above the ordinary line. In fact, all the indications in ordinary music, which occur above the lines, may equally be expressed in this system, by being placed above the letters between two

GUADET'S SYSTEM
OF MUSICAL NOTATION FOR THE BLIND.

LE GRAND ROI DAGOBERT.





lines. One musical line therefore, in this system, takes two lines when written—the letters forming a line, the accents a line. To indicate chords, the notes which form the chord are placed between parentheses. *Example: re fa, black*, is thus written (è o); *re fa la re* 3° 4° (3 è ò v 4 è).

When a passage is to be recommenced, an A in parentheses is placed after the passage, together with a number to indicate the time. A set of notes and their time are thus written: (M) to indicate the *marche* or flow, and a number to determine its duration.

“My system,” says M. Guadet, “has certainly an advantage over all others, in its simplicity, clearness, and precision. It occupies less space in embossing, and is less complicated than that of Monsieur Braille. It may even be adopted with advantage by the seeing musician.”

Notwithstanding the opinion entertained of his own system, Mons. Guadet has not thought proper to introduce it into the Institut des Jeunes Aveugles, where he is director and professor; as he considers that the system of Mons. Braille, as applied to ordinary tangible typography, is so very superior to any other, and so readily understood by the blind, that it would be unwise to introduce a new system for music alone, when the pointed dotted system universally employed can be used for both purposes.

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

There has lately been published an ingenious and simple system of embossed musical notation for the blind, the discovery of a clever and intelligent blind man, named Cornelius Mahony. This system has been adopted in the New York and Boston schools, and has received the unqualified support of the famous Dr. Howe, of European and American celebrity. It is indeed of

so valuable and simple a nature, as to merit our best consideration; and it will be wise for us to glance at an outline of its construction, in the hope that it may tend to a simplification of our present subject, and to a further enquiry into its utility and mode of operation. It has received the most unqualified support of the most renowned of American composers; amongst whom are Chapin, Wallace, Willis, and other well-known musicians. It appears to be less costly and less bulky than other methods of embossed musical notation, and possesses the *grand advantages of employing the ordinary Roman letters, instead of the more complicated arrangements of lines and spaces.*

We shall quote liberally from the excellent work of Mr. Mahony, which he most kindly presented to our Committee, and for which I take this public opportunity of thanking him.

Dr. Howe, the President of the Convention of the Superintendents of the Blind, in America, after a lengthened enquiry into the Mahony system of musical notation, thus sums up the evidence in its favour :

“ Resolved,

“ 1st. That this Convention recommend to the various institutions for the blind, and to all blind persons interested in the subject of music, the new system of notation devised by Mr. Mahony, as possessing many advantages for the blind over the systems in use.

“ 2nd. That Mr. Mahony merits the encouragement of this Convention, in his laudable efforts to supply this desideratum in the education of the blind.

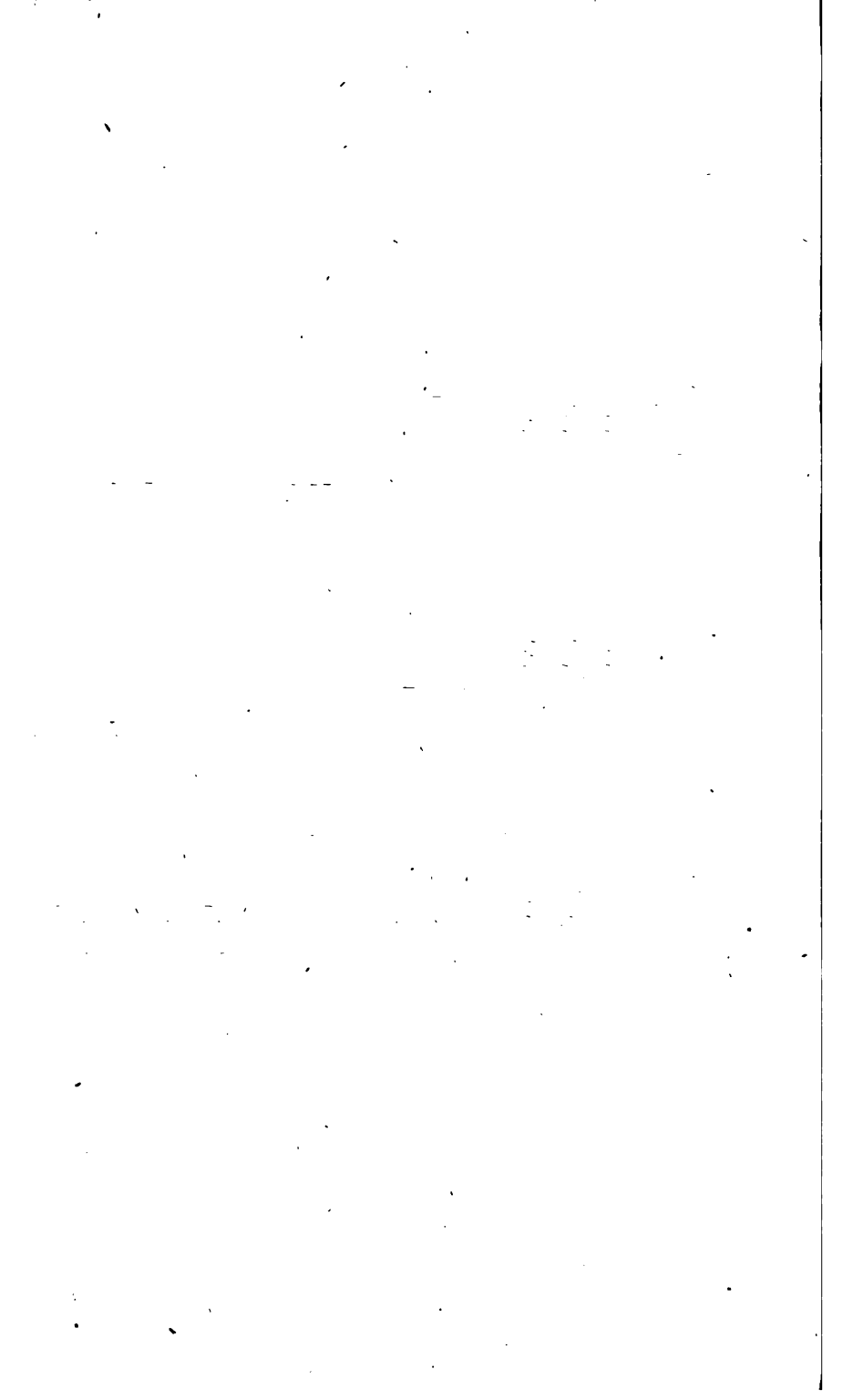
“ 3rd. That it be recommended to all the Institutions to purchase copies of Mr. Mahony’s ‘ Pianoforte Instruction Book for the Blind,’ to encourage its publication.”

“ The object of this plan,” writes Mr. Mahony, “ is to simplify the method of printing music in the raised characters for the blind, by substituting the letters by which the notes are known for the

D.

ow the skies,

a - rise.



notes themselves, the value of each note being designated by affixing to the letter the usual signs of the crotchet, quaver, semiquaver, &c. By this means the music may be compressed into a much smaller space, and thus *printed raised music* be made available in the instruction of blind pupils, which is impracticable, from the vast expense of preparing it, by the ordinary method."

After entering into a detailed account of the position of the notes on the piano and other instruments, he goes on to tell us how to find the naturals, sharps, and flats, on the pianoforte.

C natural—left-hand side of two black keys.

D ditto —between two black keys.

E ditto —at the right of two black keys.

F ditto —at the left-hand side of three black keys.

G ditto —on the right of one and left of two.

A ditto —on the right-hand of two and left of one.

B ditto —at the right of three black keys.

C sharp —a semitone to the right of C natural.

D ditto —ditto

D ditto.

E ditto —ditto

E ditto.

F ditto —ditto

F ditto.

G ditto —ditto

G ditto.

A ditto —ditto

A ditto.

B ditto —ditto

B ditto.

C flat — a semitone to the left of C natural.

B flat — ditto

B ditto.

A flat — ditto

B ditto.

G flat — ditto

G ditto.

F flat — ditto

F ditto.

E flat — ditto

E ditto.

D flat — ditto

D ditto.

This table, like the rest of his book, is in raised ordinary Roman characters; so that the blind can read them as in common embossing.

How to form a major or minor scale on any of the keys mentioned above, is thus described :

“ To form a major scale, it is necessary to have a semitone between the third and fourth, seventh and eighth. The eights being a repetition of the first, the ninth of the second, and so on, the scales may be extended to two or more octaves.

“ To form a minor scale, the semitone occurs between the second and third, seventh and eighth, ascending; and between the sixth and fifth, third and second, descending.

A semibreve is thus designated... A.

A minim. A.

A crotchet. A.

A quaver A.

A semiquaver. ... A.

A demisemiquaver!..... A.








A double demisemiquaver A.

A semiquaver rest is shaped thus

A minim rest.....

A crotchet rest.....

A quaver rest.









A semiquaver rest.....	
A demisemiquaver rest.....	
A natural	
A sharp.	
A flat.....	
A double sharp.	
A double flat	

Time is represented by two figures ; thus,



$$\frac{4}{4} \quad \frac{3}{4} \quad \frac{2}{4} \quad \frac{3}{8} \quad \frac{4}{8}$$

The upper figure designates the number of notes in a measure ; the lower figure, the value of these notes. When the lower figure is a 4, the notes are crotchets ; when the lower figure is 8, the notes are quavers. The measure may be filled with any other kind of notes ; but their value must be equal to the upper figures. $\frac{2}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{2}$ are sometimes used in slow time, or sacred music, the lower figures denoting minims.

“ When a dot is placed on the right-hand side of a note or rest, it increases that note or rest one half its value.

“ A dotted semibreve, thus .  . , equals three minims,  ;
 a dotted minim, .  . , equals three crotchets, thus,  ;
 a dotted crotchet, thus  . , equals three quavers, thus  ;
 a dotted quaver, thus  . , equals three semiquavers, thus .

“ When two dots are placed at the right-hand side of a note, the second dot adds to that note half the value of the first dot.

“ Thus a double-dotted minim  . is equal to three crotchets and one quaver, .

" All the other notes are affected by the double dot in the same manner.

" Of the Signs generally used in Music.

" When a sharp, thus $\sharp A$, or a flat, thus $\flat A$, is placed before a note, it affects every note of the same name in that bar, and the first note in the next bar, if of the same name, unless marked by a natural, thus $\natural A$: in which case it retains its usual character.

$\overset{3}{A\ A\ A}$
" If a figure 3 is placed over or under three notes, thus $\overset{3}{A\ A\ A}$, it reduces them to the time of two of the same name, and $\underset{3}{A\ A\ A}$ is called a triplet.

" If a curved line is placed over or under two or more notes, thus $\overbrace{A\ A\ A}$, it is called a slur, and should be played in a flowing style.


" If dots, thus $\overset{\cdot}{A}\ \overset{\cdot}{A}\ \overset{\cdot}{A}$, $\underset{\cdot}{A}\ \underset{\cdot}{A}\ \underset{\cdot}{A}\ \underset{\cdot}{A}$, are placed over or under notes, they are called staccato, and should be played distinctly.

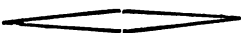
" If a character shaped thus \sim be placed over under a note, it means a turn, and consists of four notes, one above and one below the principal, which is played twice.

" If a character shaped thus *tr* be placed over or under a note, it is called a turned shake ; the note to which it points, together with the one above it, must form a quick alternate movement, ending with the four notes of the turn.

" A pause, shaped thus \frown \smile , placed over or under a note or rest, places the time of that note or rest at the will of the performer.

" When a character shaped thus < is placed over or under a strain, it is called crescendo, and signifies increase.

“ When a character shaped thus  is placed over or under a strain, it is called diminuendo, and signifies diminish.

“ When a character shaped thus  is placed over or under a strain, it is called a swell, and signifies increase from the left to the centre, and diminish from the centre to the right.

General Rules and Explanations.

“ Central C is taken by all composers as the dividing line between the base and treble. In this system, the line between F \sharp and G first above that note, for the treble. The line between F \sharp and G first below that note, for the base.

Example.

{	Treb.	G
		F \sharp
	Central C	
	Bass.	G
		F \sharp

“ All the notes between F \sharp and G an octave above, are placed above the line ; all the notes between G and F \sharp an octave below, are placed below the line.

Example in C major.

{	T \sharp	G A B C D E F	G A B C D E F
		G A B C D E F	
	B \sharp	G A B C D E F	G A B C D E F
		G A B C D E F	

“ If two or more notes in the same octave are struck together, they are represented thus :

{	T	G-B	A-D	C-E	G-C-E	A-C-F	B-D-F
	B	G-B	A-D	C-E	G-C-E	A-C-F	G

“ If two or more notes in different octaves are struck together, they are represented thus :

{	T	G	G	G	G	G	G-C	G-C
		E	D	C	B	C-E	E	C-E
{	B	G	G	G	G	G	G-C	C
		E	D	C	B	C-E	E	C

Example in Octaves.

{	T	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
		G	A	B	C	D	E	F
{	B	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
		G	A	B	C	D	E	F

Example in full Chords and Sevenths.

{	T# 4	G-B-D-F	A-C-E	G-B-D	A-C	C-B	F-A	C
			E	D	D-F	B-E	C	G-B-D
{	B# 4	G	A	G	D	E	D	
		G	A	G	D	E	D	G

“ The perpendicular line drawn across the staff is called a bar, and divides the music into equal parts according to the time marked at the beginning.

“ The double bar points out the end of a strain or part; and dotted thus :||: both parts of the music are to be repeated.”

We have now to consider the whole subject of *the Musical Instruction of the Blind* as more directly bearing upon ourselves, and that Institution to the welfare of which the Committee have devoted so much time and thought. The study of Music has hitherto been there conducted with great success, under the able superintendence of Mr. Turle, at a very considerable outlay (about £200 per annum), exclusive of the Board of Four Assistant Teachers, and the cost of instruments, &c. But *the study has been*

confined to sacred music only; chiefly for the plain and obvious reason that the musical pupils were designed to become parochial organists. Of the propriety of this arrangement there is not the slightest doubt; while it immediately leads us to the consideration of the other branch of the subject, which I am now desirous of bringing before you—namely, **THE FORMATION OF A BAND OF INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMERS FOR THE STUDY OF SECULAR AS WELL AS SACRED MUSIC.**

1. From the foregoing investigation, it is, I think, quite evident that we are behind hand in the musical instruction of the blind in England, when compared with other nations.

2. No real attempt has ever been made for the formation of a band of instrumental performers. The question, therefore, of the success or failure of the plan has not been fairly tested. The arguments brought against the plan—potent though they appear in words—may, after all, prove unsound when tested by experience.

3. Reasoning by analogy, there appears to be no valid reason *why a band of blind performers should not be organized, chosen from such of the most diligent and best-conducted boys as possess a decided talent for music*; who, when they leave the school, should rely, not only on the practice of a trade for support, but also on their efficiency as orchestral performers. A couple of extra years at the school would in all cases ensure proficiency in both these respects, *if the mastery of a trade were made indispensable from the first.*

4. Such a band might be easily established, with three instructors, at an annual expense of about £150, after the first outlay of £100 for instruments. Concerts might then be given, publicly sought, and special assistance asked for.

5. The system of instruction might be either that of Monsieur Braille, or the American: the latter, however, being clearly preferable, from its simplicity, and foundation on the embossed Roman type.

6. If such a plan were thoughtfully and well digested; and carefully carried into effect under proper guidance, there is every probability that the public would become really interested in so important, though novel an undertaking; and with their assistance a new career might be opened to the blind, of a kind likely to add to their happiness and well-being.

7. That such a career is one in which the blind themselves would engage most heartily there is no doubt, if we judge only by the eagerness with which the pupils of our Institution welcomed the subject, when we last took into consideration the state of the little Band already formed and brought to such a degree of efficiency by their own private endeavour.

Such is the plan which I now venture, after most careful examination, to submit to the Members of the Committee, with the assurance that to this, as to every other subject connected with the welfare of the Blind, their warmest sympathies will be given, and that with me they will feel its true importance. My only plea for intruding so long on their time and patience must be the deep interest I feel in the happiness and well-being of the afflicted class, on which my own peculiar position has led me to bestow, for many years, the best energies of my mind and body.

To you, my dear Sir, so long our indefatigable Chairman, the subject I am sure needs no further recommendation. The fact that it concerns the welfare of those to whom you have been so long devoted, is at once a passport to your most careful attention, as well as to the fullest generosity of your hand and heart.

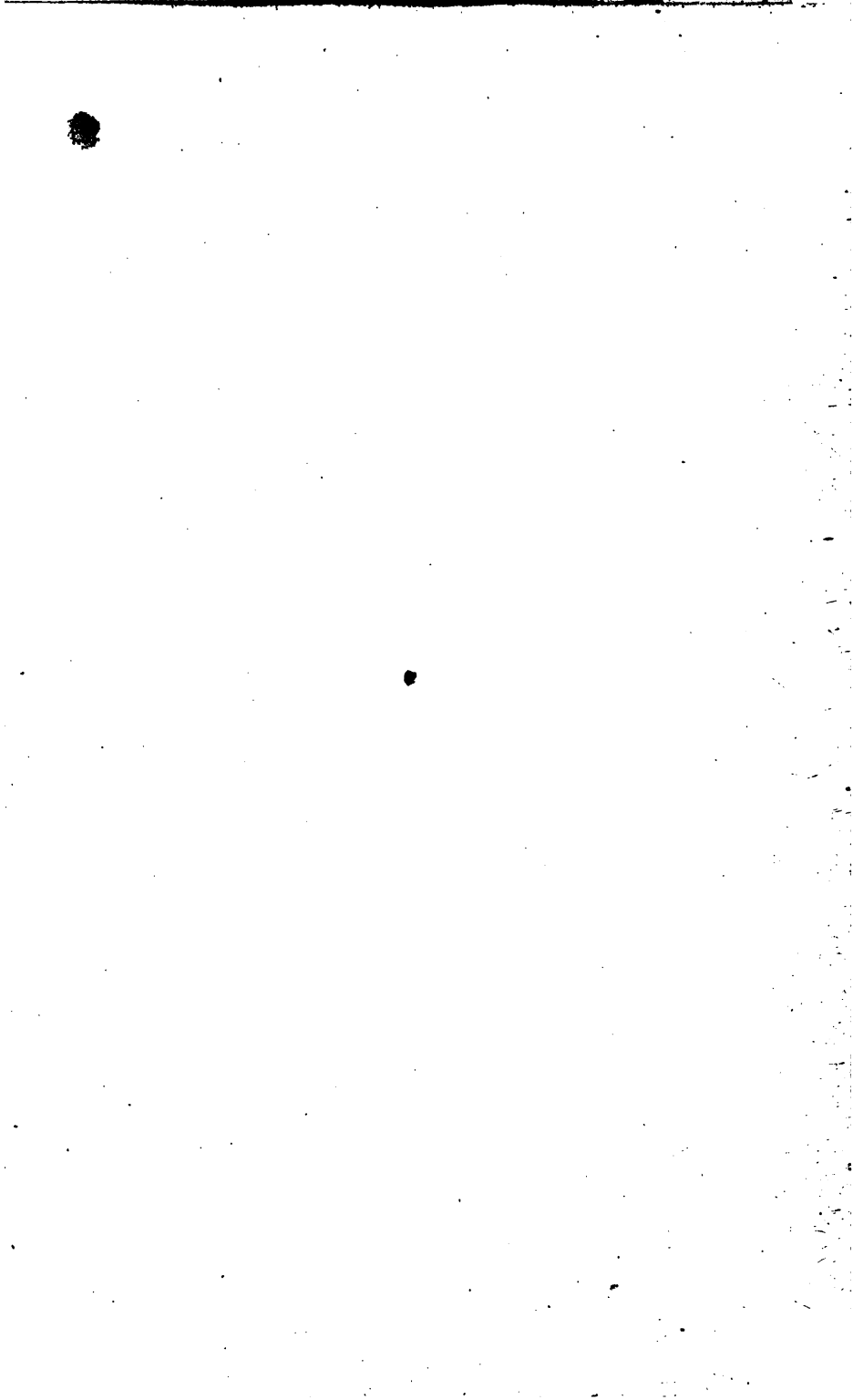
Believe me,

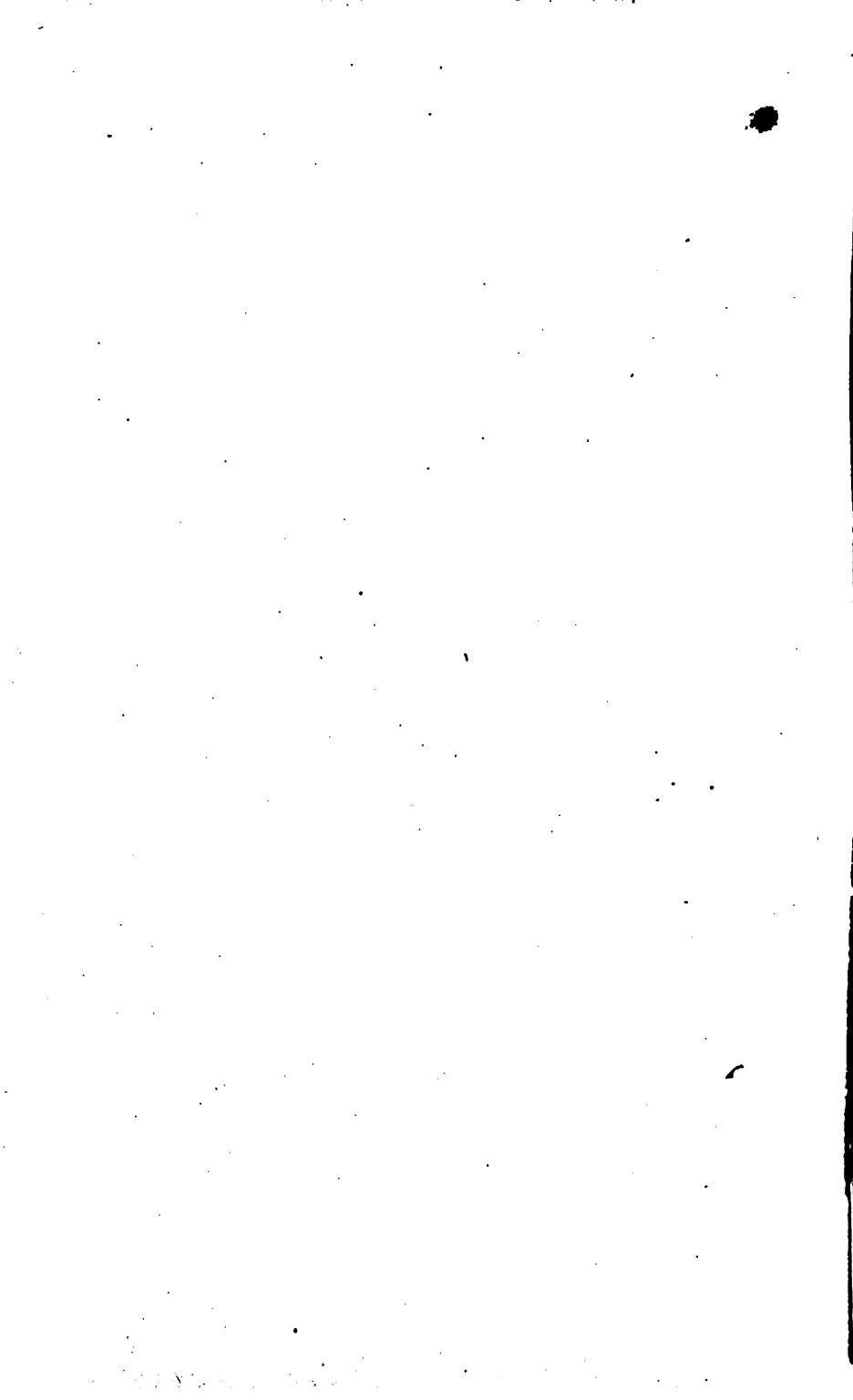
MY DEAR Mr. STERRY,

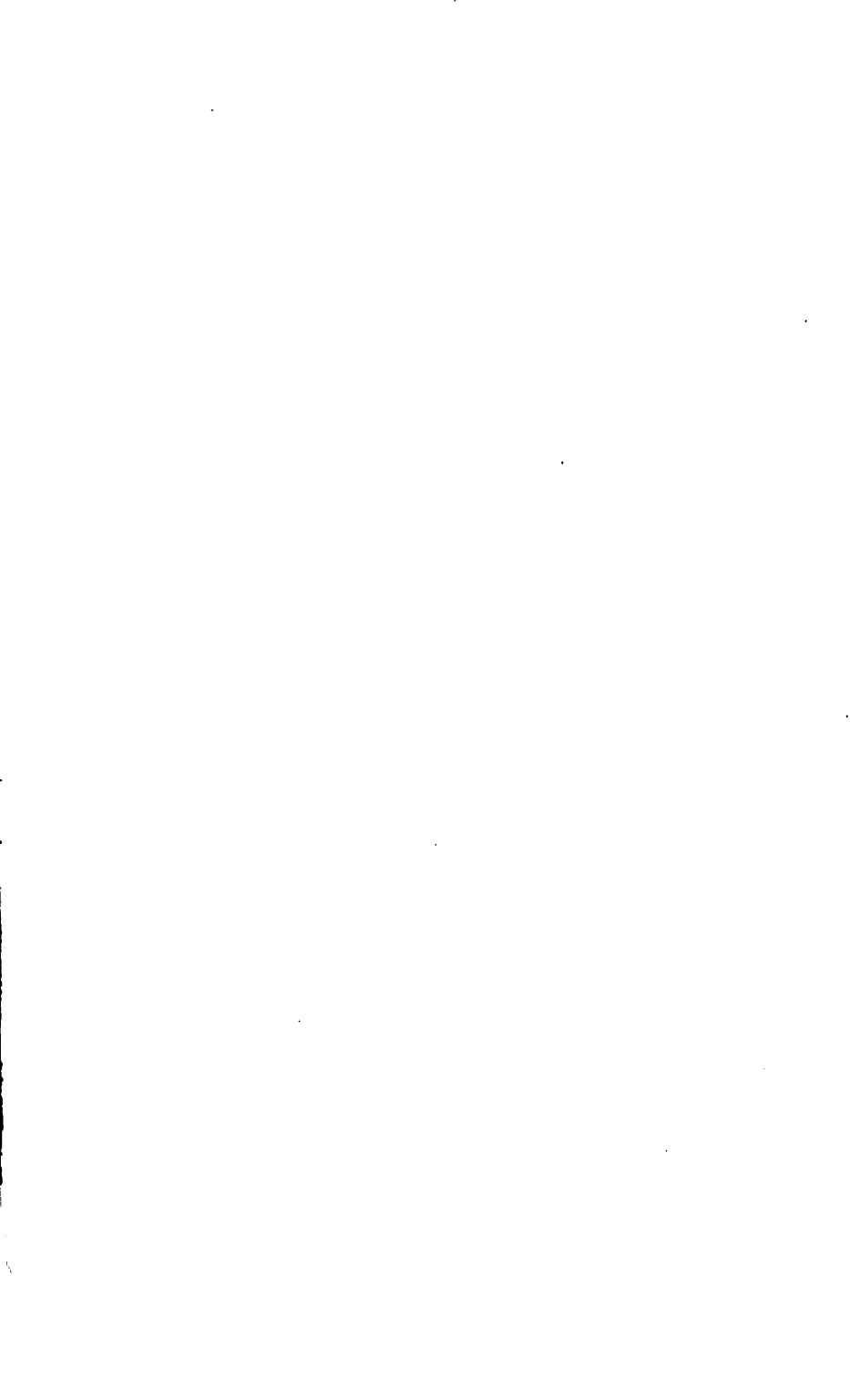
Yours very sincerely,

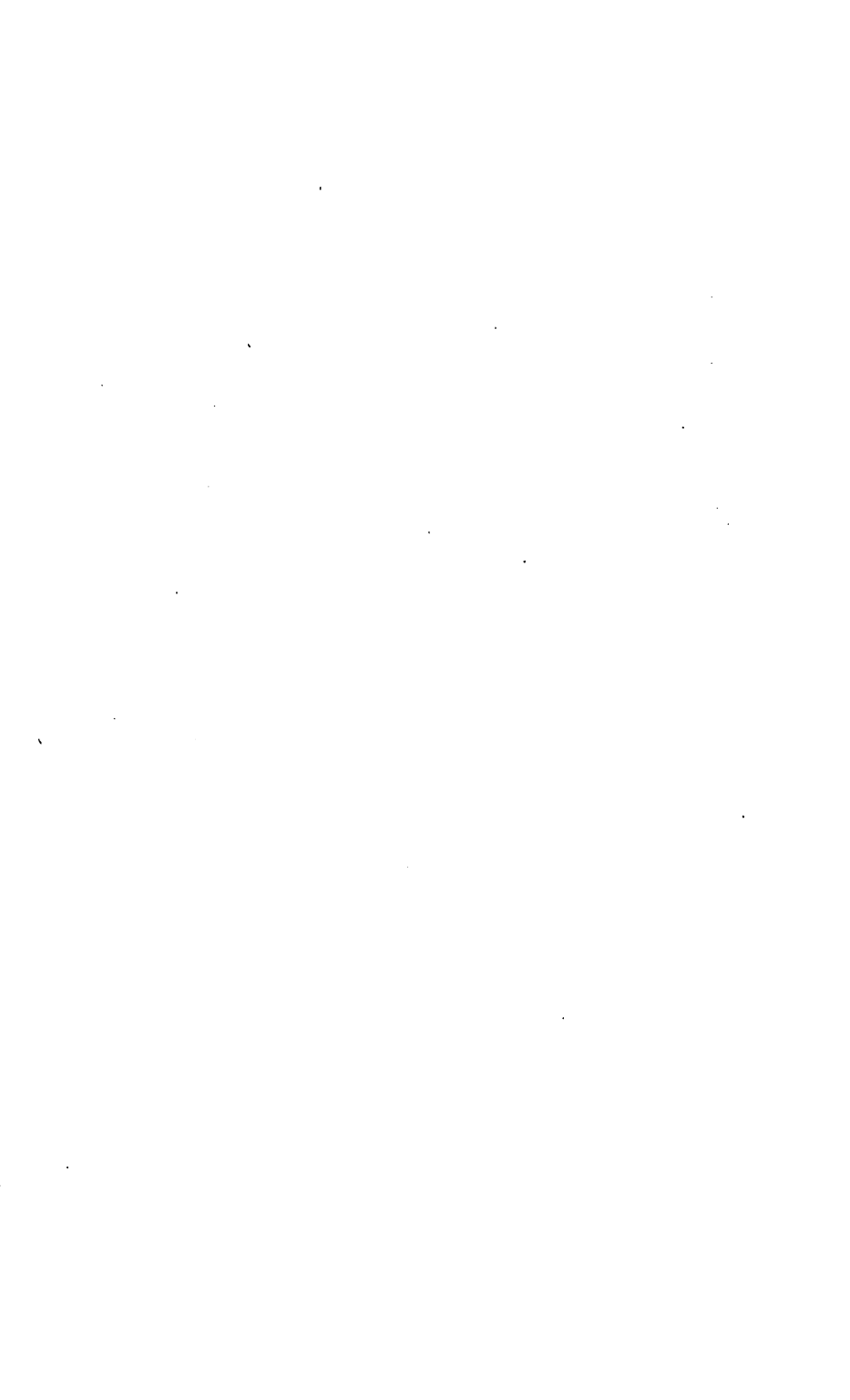
EDMUND C. JOHNSON.

6, Saville Row,
December, 1855.









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